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From: Shore, Berry
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Subject: Hoosick Falls POFA Clips

Hoosick Falls residents still waiting on blood test results

By WRGB Staff

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WRG

HOOSICK FALLS It has now been three months to the day since the New York State Department of Health began taking blood from residents to determine the level of PFOA in their systems.

PFOA is a chemical linked to cancer that was found in the municipal water supply.

Health officials started taking blood tests on February 13th. Exactly one month ago a DOH spokesperson told CBS6 residents would begin seeing results in a few weeks. Today, still no results.

James and Velma Brown, who have lived in Hoosick Falls for 44 years, are frustrated.

"We can see the [Saint-Gobain Performance Plastics] plant from our house. It's like a view from our house," Velma Brown said. "You know, we all want to know what's going on. What our blood level is and not to know is kind of annoying."

It is a sentiment shared by Hoosick Falls resident Linda Ysais, who also had her blood tested in back in February.

"I don't know what takes so long," Ysais said.

Health officials say testing for PFOA is complicated, they say it is not like a simple cholesterol test at your doctor's office. To make matters worse, the Department of Health says there are only four labs across the country certified by the state to test for the chemical.

Still, health officials have been saying for weeks that the results of the first wave of those tested for PFOA would be out in two to three months.

"To be honest that is frustrating. But working with my water and all that is, the whole thing is frustrating," Ysais said.

A spokesperson from the Department of Health told CBS6 today people can expect those results in the next couple of weeks. Health officials are not only busy compiling those results but they are also making sure people have some context to compare their numbers to.

Once the results go out health officials will be available by phone to explain what the numbers mean. If anyone in that area has not had their blood tested, you can still call 518-402-7950 to schedule an appointment.

Rep. Maloney Asks Feds To Investigate Newburgh Water Contamination

By Hank Gross

May 14, 2016

WAMC Northeast Public Radio

Saying that since Stewart Airport, specifically the Air National Guard Base, is "the most likely source" of contamination of the City of Newburgh's water supply, Congressman Sean Patrick Maloney called on the Defense Department to investigate the situation.

Maloney said investigation must get to the bottom of the situation to protect Newburgh residents

“I’m less concerned with blame than with accountability and with fixing the problem, so the first thing we need to do is we need to identify the source of the contamination so we can stop it,” he said.

Maloney said it is known that PFOA and PFOS are hazardous substances; the question is what is the concentrate that is considered safe.

“We need to get the science right on that. That’s why the EPA has to get off the dime on this and tell us what is real and what is not,” he said

Then there is the bill to pay to remediate the problem.

“Somebody else is going to have to be responsible for what they’ve caused here when we know exactly what happened and by whom,” Maloney said. “The City of Newburgh is not the culpable party here.”

DEC probed Taconic plastics plant in 1997: Health complaints blamed on toxic emissions in Petersburg

By Brendan J. Lyons

Updated 10:10 pm, Sunday, May 15, 2016

Albany Times Union

Albany

The state Department of Environmental Conservation investigated complaints nearly 20 years ago that people who lived near a plastics plant in Petersburg were becoming sick from the toxic chemicals emanating from the facility.

The 1997 investigation focused on emissions from the Taconic plastics plant on Route 22. Internal DEC documents indicate state officials were aware then that the facility's high-heat processes made the perfluorinated compounds used at the manufacturing facility more toxic as they left the plant's smokestacks. Internal state documents obtained by the Times Union also show that environmental officials were aware the hazardous man-made chemicals were flowing from smokestacks used at similar manufacturing plants in Hoosick Falls, as well as in Bennington, Vt., and Merrimack, N.H.

"It is shocking that DEC had information going back nearly 20 years regarding the toxicity of this chemical and apparently never followed up on it in a meaningful way with this potential exposure to local populations," said David Engel, an attorney for Healthy Hoosick Water, a grass-roots citizens group that formed last year in response to what its members said was a lack of action by state and local officials. "In 2014, the state Department of Health acted as if they'd never heard of the chemical."

A March 1997 memo by the New York DEC's Toxic Assessment Section, which was part of the agency's Division of Air Resources, said government scientists were examining the toxicity of the Petersburg plant's chemicals "in response to the neighborhood complaints around Taconic plastics of a disagreeable stink, reports of nausea and headaches, and visible bluish smoke."

Man honored for finding PFOA problem

WNYT Staff

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The United States Environmental Protection Agency is honoring the man credited with uncovering the PFOA problem in Hoosick Falls.

Michael Hickey was presented with an environmental champion award today in Manhattan.

Hickey tested the water in his hometown of Hoosick Falls after losing his father to kidney cancer.

Those tests showed high levels of the potentially cancer causing chemical, PFOA.

Had it not been for his efforts, residents may never have known the dangers lurking in their water

EPA Honors Hoosick Falls Man for Calling Attention to Water Issues

By Katie Eastman

Friday, May 13, 2016 at 10:45 PM EDT

Time Warner Cable, Capital Region

Longtime Hoosick Falls resident Michael Hickey is not only an environmental hero, but also a hometown hero.

"By taking his own water samples and having them analyzed at his own cost, and calling attention to this important issue for his entire community," it was announced at an Environmental Protection Agency event Friday, "the contamination is now being addressed, in the public water supply and private wells."

Hickey was honored by the EPA for discovering high levels of the potentially cancer-causing chemical PFOA in the Hoosick Falls water supply.

"I took it on with Dr. Martinez, and we kinda pushed the issue to see if there was anything we could do to clean it up in our area, and it's grown since then," Hickey said.

When he took the initiative to test his own water in 2014 after his father died from kidney cancer, Hickey never thought he would be receiving awards for his work two years later.

"When you do something like this, this isn't really what your main goal is," Hickey said. "The main goal for us was to get the water cleaned up, and the EPA did a fantastic job in helping us."

According to the Department of Health, the municipal water in Hoosick Falls is now safe to drink because of a temporary filtration system. The water crisis in the small Rensselaer County village has since sparked a sense of awareness across the state.

"With what we did with testing for the PFOA, other communities are able to go in and test as well," Hickey said.

With water contamination issues now a hot topic across the country, Hickey is happy to have made a difference in the community he calls home.

"There's continuing problems, and it's kinda the way of the world of the industry right now, and the lifestyle we've lived for so long," Hickey said.